



Congressman Tim Bishop

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U.S. HOUSE PASSES BISHOP'S BILL PROTECTING NATION'S BEACHES

Congressman's Bill Will Protect Long Island's & Nation's Coastal Waters

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Tim Bishop announced a victory today for Long Island's beaches, and the entire coastline of the United States. Bishop's legislation, H.R. 1721, which provides funding for water quality monitoring under the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act, was passed by the House of Representatives. Bishop's bill extends grant programs to improve coastal waters for six more years. Bishop also lauded passage of a bill today to reauthorize the Long Island Sound Restoration Act.

"I am proud that my colleagues in the House of Representatives recognized the importance of my bill," Bishop stated. "The BEACH Act is an important tool to protect our environment and the health of families who enjoy our nation's beaches. Particularly on Long Island, we treasure our beaches, and families need to feel confident that we will protect their health and safety."

The BEACH Act was originally passed in October 2000 and was set to expire this year unless renewed by Congress. Bishop introduced his legislation in April 2005 with bipartisan support. The BEACH Act is part of the Clean Water Act and requires states to create and implement water quality monitoring programs that protect beachgoers from pathogens in coastal waters. Each year, more than 180 million people visit our nation's coasts, seeking rest and relaxation. America's beaches are part of a \$50 billion industry supporting 28 million jobs.

"Ensuring the livelihood of our local fishermen and providing clean beaches for hardworking families to take a well-deserved break should be obvious priorities," Bishop added.

Congressman Bishop's legislation reauthorizes \$30 million in grants for states to develop and implement beach water quality monitoring and notification programs. Since the BEACH Act was signed into law, 35 states eligible to receive grants have created new and effective guidelines for gauging water cleanliness and public notification.

Bishop is an original cosponsor of H.R. 3963, which also passed today to reauthorize funding for the Long Island Sound Restoration Act (LISRA). LISRA provides grants to New York State and Connecticut for the creation of programs to protect the Long Island Sound watershed. The bill also permits funding to maintain the EPA's Long Island Sound Program Office, which studies the Sound's water quality and ways to ensure the protection of the estuary well into the future. However, this program has been under-funded, and Bishop expressed his hope that Congress can do better.

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